

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (Twice Amended) A sweetener composition, comprising a mixture of:

- (a) N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine-1-methyl ester; and
- (b) Acesulfame K,

wherein said Acesulfame K is present in said mixture in an amount of 50 to 97% by weight based on the total amount of said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester and said Acesulfame K and wherein said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester comprises a C-type crystal or an A-type crystal.

12. (Twice Amended) A drink composition, comprising:

(A) a mixture, comprising

- (a) N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester;
- and

- (b) Acesulfame K;
- and

(B) a potable liquid,

wherein said Acesulfame K is present in said mixture in an amount of 50 to 97% by weight based on the total amount of said
N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester and said Acesulfame K and wherein said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester comprises a C-type crystal or an A-type crystal.

13. (Twice Amended) A method for preparing a sweetener composition, comprising:

(1) drying A₂-type crystals of N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester, to obtain C-type crystals of N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester; and

(2) mixing said C-type crystals of N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester with Acesulfame K, to obtain a mixture,

wherein said Acesulfame K is present in said mixture in an amount of 50 to 97% by weight based on the total weight of said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester and said Acesulfame K and wherein said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester comprises a C-type crystal having a water content of less than 3% by weight.

14. (Twice Amended) A method for producing a sweetener, comprising:

(1) mixing N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester with Acesulfame K, to obtain a mixture, wherein said Acesulfame K is present in said mixture in an amount of 50 to 97% by weight based on the total weight of said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester and said Acesulfame K and wherein said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester comprises a C-type crystal or an A-type crystal.

16. (Twice Amended) A method for improving the dissolution rate of N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester, comprising:

(1) mixing said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester with Acesulfame K, prior to dissolving said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester, to obtain a mixture,

wherein said Acesulfame K is present in said mixture in an amount of 50 to 97% by weight based on the total weight of said
N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester and said Acesulfame K and wherein said N-[N-(3,3-dimethylbutyl)-L- α -aspartyl]-L-phenylalanine 1-methyl ester comprises a C-type crystal or an A-type crystal.